The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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GIVE, GIVE ENOUGH
To Your
Community Chest

Green Says T-H Law Repeal Primary Goal of AFL Legislative Program; Secretary of Labor Tobin Says Democrats Will Make Good on Promises

Metal, Building Trades Departments Conclude Annual Convention Sessions

Government Policies On Wages, Ships Hit at Conclave

Cincinnati.—Speakers before the 39th annual convention of the AFL's Metal Trades Department assailed policies of the U. S. Maritime Commission and the Navy Department which have ignored the best interests of organized labor and the nation.

In a section of his report, which was adopted unanimously by the delegates, John P. Frey, president of the department, charged that action by the Navy Department in abolishing its Naval Wage Review Board on which labor was represented was "one of the most outrageous governmental actions that I know of."

Pledging action, delegates voted unanimously to attempt to correct this injustice by means of congressional action. Expressing the attitude of the convention, Mr. Frey declared:

"I believe that we are entitled to representation in every federal agency that has anything to do with issuing regulations, rules, and wage scales affecting labor, and until such time as we get that recognition, we are getting platitudes when we are told around election time that we are all free citizens."

Action of the Maritime Commission in awarding the vast bulk of the contracts for new ship construction to East Coast yards run by "Big Steel" came under fire of the eloquent oratory of Charles J. MacGowan, president of the AFL's Boilermakers' Union.

MacGowan denounced the "indefensible discrimination" against West Coast shipyards, which are almost entirely under the AFL banner and which haven't received a single ship contract. Yards on the Great Lakes and Gulf Coast have been similarly ignored, he said.

Out of contracts for 81 vessels awarded so far by the government, all but two or three have gone to the "Big Steel" yards on the North Atlantic Coast, MacGowan declared.

"And that's in the face of the fact that a great portion of the taxpayers' money used to build those ships comes from the West Coast," he pointed out.

MacGowan revealed he had assigned a representative to the West Coast to help lead a campaign to bring this gross injustice to the attention of the people and to mobilize demands for a "fair deal."

"This outrage perpetrated against the workers, taxpayers and shipbuilders of the Pacific Coast, as well as the Gulf and Great Lakes, must be rectified," he declared.

West Coast metal trades representatives also denounced the discrimination, and the convention instructed officers of the department to take "all possible steps" to secure a fair distribution of ship contracts.

Meany Predicts Labor In Politics to Stay; Praises Keenan

Cincinnati.—The concluding session of the 41st annual convention of the AFL's Building and Construction Trades Department heard George Meany, secretary-treasurer of the American Federation of Labor, declare that the recent election results mean that "labor is in politics to stay" for the purpose of "service to the general membership of the trade union movement."

In an address to convention delegates, Mr. Meany disclaimed any desire on the part of organized labor to enter politics for selfish ends. On the contrary, he said, "we are in politics to defend and protect ourselves from the type of legislation which we had at the hands of the 80th Congress."

Praising Labor's League for Political Education, and all its branches in the various states and cities, for the magnificent job it did in the recent election, the popular AFL leader singled out Joseph D. Keenan, LLPE director, for his successful efforts in organizing political campaigns at the grass roots level. He said:

"The work was done at the precinct level, and it was through Joe Keenan's efforts that we were successful in organizing local branches of LLPE in practically every large city and community in the United States.

"When you get the full story, you will realize that the work was done at the local level, that the local representatives of labor were willing and able, when they realized they had their own future and their own welfare at stake, they were willing and able to push doorbells, as the saying goes, and to really organize on the local level.

"We have a number of instances where we can prove beyond question of doubt that the election of certain Congressmen over our enemies in the 80th Congress was accomplished without a single dollar or without a single effort being made on their part by the political organizations to which they belong; that everything that was done for them, that every dollar of expense they had to pay out, came from the contributions of organized labor in one form or another. That was accomplished, as I said before, at the local level.

"It is an indication to me that American labor can be politically important provided you convince them that their own welfare and their own future is at stake. I don't think that this election proved that you can take the American trade unionist and use him politically for your own selfish interest. In fact, I think that there are one or two outstanding instances that proved quite the contrary, that you cannot direct, you cannot deliver—let me use that expression—that you cannot deliver the American trade unionist politically at your own whim or fancy."

Important Resolutions Before AFL Convention

Cincinnati.—Committees of the AFL's 67th convention settled down to consideration of a host of important resolutions which will be acted upon by the convention.

As the delegates gathered for the opening session, a total of 79 such resolutions covering most of the AFL's progressive legislative program had been introduced. Many more will be submitted and considered as convention activities swing into high gear.

Topics covered include a wide range of questions of interest to organized labor, some of which call for: Increase of the personal exemption under Federal income tax laws; extension of the coverage of the social security system and an increase of the benefits under the law; lifting of the minimum wage to $1 per hour; adoption of a civil rights program, and enactment of a long-range housing plan to provide at least 500,000 public housing units a year. Other resolutions recommend a course of action on foreign policy, urge the continuation of Labor's League for Political Education, and set forth other guide lines for future AFL policy.

Resolution No. 1, submitted by delegates from the United Hat, Cap and Millinery Workers' Union, calls for the lifting of the personal exemption under the income tax laws from $600 to at least $850 to raise mass purchasing power and to "restore the principle of taxation in accordance with ability to pay."

Lifting of the minimum wage to $1 an hour was proposed in Resolutions 12, 18 and 28, submitted by delegates from the California State Federation of Labor, the West Virginia Federation of Labor, and the AFL's United Textile Workers of America. All these resolutions were based on the need for such action to meet inflationary pressures.

Numerous resolutions for the improvement of the social security system called for the lowering of the retirement age; provision of a minimum benefit of $100 per month to those eligible under the retirement plan; extension of the coverage of the law to persons now excluded from its benefits, including agricultural workers.

Resolution No. 63, introduced by William Nagorsne of the Wisconsin State Federation of Labor, urged the convention to call for enactment of legislation by the 81st Congress to provide a long-range housing program including the construction of a minimum of 500,000 units of public low-rental housing. Such action, the resolution said, is the only possible way "to secure decent homes for low-income families now living under crowded, unhealthful slum conditions."

Other resolutions pressed for the establishment of a daily labor newspaper; urged improvement in the personnel policies of the federal government; and advocated legislative action to clarify the Supreme Court's recent "overtime-on-overtime" ruling.

UNIONS WIN OUT IN 73% OF BARGAINING ELECTIONS

Washington. — Seventy-three percent of all collective bargaining elections held by the National Labor Relations Board during the 3-month period ended September 30th were won by unions, it was revealed in a quarterly report issued by the board.

In 1,493 elections conducted, results were as follows: Won by an AFL union, 550; won by a CIO union, 245; won by an unaffiliated union, 270; no union, 410; and indeterminate, 18.

Cabinet Member Says T-H Law Must Be Killed; Pledges Drive to Rebuild Labor Department, Foster Collective Bargaining

Cincinnati.—Secretary of Labor Maurice J. Tobin pledged the aid of the Truman administration in carrying out the election mandate of the people for the "positive unequivocal repeal of the Taft-Hartley law."

In a fighting speech delivered before the 67th AFL convention in session here, the 47-year-old Cabinet member predicted that the 81st Congress will "right the wrongs" of the 80th Congress.

A thunderous ovation was accorded Mr. Tobin when he pledged that as Secretary of Labor he would try to carry out the platform of the Democratic party, which called for outright repeal of the vicious antilabor legislation, and work for the following program:

"1. To restore the Labor Department to its rightful and full strength as the voice of the wage earners in the government, and as the centralized agency of governmental labor and manpower functions.

"2. To consult the leaders of organized labor on all major policy issues, both legislative and administrative.

"3. Continue to develop in the department a program to foster and improve free collective bargaining and to protect and advance the rights and the welfare of the millions of American men and women who work for a wage."

In addition to the repeal of the Taft-Hartley law, Mr. Tobin declared that the election results gave President Truman and the new Congress a clear, unmistakable mandate from the people for enactment of progressive legislation, designed to make America a better place in which to live. Such a legislative program would include, he said, lifting of the minimum wage to at least 75 cents an hour, extension of the social security system; improvement of public health measures; strengthening of the Labor Department; and imposing curbs on the soaring cost of living.

Rejecting efforts of the press, radio, editorial writers, and the pollsters to impose "thought control" on the American people, the voters expressed their preference for "progressive and aggressive government policies that will protect their interests and their welfare, and, at the same time preserve their freedoms."

As a result of the election of Nov. 2, 1948, Mr. Tobin declared, "The aim and ideals of organized labor became generally recognized and embraced by the great masses of American people as common aims and ideals for the benefit of the entire nation." He added:

"Today, after a rank appeal to the people to disregard the issues on the grounds that they would be taken by the world as signs of disharmony in foreign and domestic affairs, the American people are more united than ever before.

"They are united in a resolve that democracy and the rights and welfare of the individual shall not suffer from want of an aggressive, active program to them living, growing realities.

"The American people, through the efforts of organized labor, have recognized the tragedy and ineptness of the Taft-Hartley law and the dangerous philosophy behind it.

"They have placed themselves on the side of free collective bargaining, free unions, free men, and a free, competitive society."

Mr. Tobin pointd out that labor-management relations can never be treated purely as a legal problem. He said: "The attempt to settle differences between labor and management by legal hairsplitting increases rather than relieves tensions where they already exist. It induces tensions and antagonisms where they did not exist before.

"Friendly, stable and mutually satisfactory cooperation between unions and management, as you well know, cannot survive where the relationship between the parties is perpetually one of plaintiff and defendant.

"Such cooperation can result only from 2-way, across-the-table discussion and negotiation. This is the way of free collective bargaining, agreements freely arrived at by the parties." Concluding his address, the Secretary warned that the hard work of attaining labor's objectives is still ahead. He declared:

"Our victory in the election gave us the tools to do the job that the American people want done. The hard work of making the program a reality is still before us. So is the difficult task of reaching agreement on many points on which there are bound to be differences of method and purpose. If our work is to endure, it must have the acceptance and approval of the majority of the American people. I realize that as Secretary of Labor I have hard arduous work ahead. I will need your advice, support and cooperation. With God's help, I am sure that we can bring this challenge to our abilities to a successful conclusion for the benefit of all America."

AFL Union Label Trades Convention Maps Drive to Promote Union Goods

Cincinnati.—Delegates to the 40th annual convention of the AFL's Union Label Trades Department pledged themselves to greater efforts to promote the widespread purchase of union-made goods and services.

Stressing the importance of the union insignia as a symbol of the cause of organized labor and as an indication of quality goods and services, Matthew Woll, AFL Executive Council member and president of the department, urged a great campaign to channel the purchasing power of America toward patronage of establishments cooperating with the AFL's union label trades program. He said:

"If we could but organize the consuming power of the members of organized labor, what a vast power we would wield in the markets, not only within the confines of the United States but in the world at large, because, after all, the wage earner constitutes the great markets of the world, domestic as well as foreign. If we could organize the members of trade unions on some basis of centering their purchasing power and patronage on union labels, shop cards and buttons, there could be no force, economic, financial or otherwise, that could defeat our efforts."

In an address to the delegates, AFL President William Green praised the union label trades organizations throughout the nation which so successfully worked for the overthrow of supporters of the obnoxious Taft-Hartley law. He said he looked to the Union Label Trades Department to carry on the great task of informing the people of America that the union label, as a sign of a quality product produced under the best working conditions, was a protection for them and for the nation.

In other actions of the convention, delegates passed unanimously resolutions expressing their appreciation to the labor press, to the American Federationist, and to the AFL Weekly News Service, for the cooperation given the department in publicizing the activities of the department and of its annual special event, the Union-Industries Show.

Secretary-Treasurer I. M. Ornburn reported to the convention in detail on the great successes won by the show held in Milwaukee last May, and predicted even greater triumphs would be scored by the coming show scheduled for Cleveland in 1949. He hailed the annual events as evidence of the fine spirit of cooperation and teamwork which exists between fair-minded employers and the American Federation of Labor.

WHOLESALE PRICES DIP FRACTIONALLY IN WEEK

Washington. — Average wholesale prices declined 0.7 percent during the week ended Nov. 6, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The bureau's comprehensive index was 162.7 percent of the 1926 average, which was approximately the level of the first week in May, 1948. It was 1.2 percent below 4 weeks ago but 3 percent above the corresponding week of last year.

FARM CROP HARVEST HIGHEST IN U. S. HISTORY

Washington.—A record corn crop of 3,649,510,000 bushels — 82,000,000 bushels more than forecast a month ago—was estimated by the Department of Agriculture in its semifinal crop report.

The huge corn crop is about 12 percent above the previous record of 1946. It led the harvest of the greatest output of farm crops in the nation's history, which proceeded rapidly toward completion during October under virtually ideal conditions. Yields of most late-growing crops improved over estimates of a month ago.

CONNORS NAMED DELEGATE TO UNESCO CONFERENCE

New York.—John D. Connors, director of the Workers Education Bureau of America, sailed on the Queen Elizabeth to attend the Third General UNESCO Conference. This conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization will convene in Beirut, Lebanon.

Recommended by President Green because of his position as director of the AFL's official educational agency, Mr. Connors was appointed by Secretary of State Marshall to serve as labor adviser to the U. S. delegation to the conference.

In addition to his official duties in connection with the conference, Mr. Connors plans to study the trade union movements and adult and workers' education programs in the Middle East.

AFL Labor Press Is Extended Praise For Election Work

Cincinnati.—AFL President William Green and Joseph D. Keenan, director of Labor's League for Political Education, hailed the activities of the labor press for the magnificent work they did in the weeks and months preceding the election.

Speaking to the delegates attending a banquet which concluded the 37th annual convention of the International Labor Press of America, Mr. Green said that all those connected with the labor press had made a great contribution in the winning of one of the greatest victories of the labor movement. He predicted that the work of the press would raise it to high esteem and will create a new sense of value for the worth of the labor press in the field of organized labor.

Mr. Keenan praised the "yeoman service" given by the labor papers in connection with the LLPE drives and hailed the AFL papers as the "greatest avenue for the dissemination of news" to trade union members.

Other speakers who expressed congratulations included Matthew Woll, president of ILPA and an AFL Executive Council member, and William C. Birthright, a colleague of Mr. Woll's on the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor. Mr. Woll declared that the labor press presents the "man-in-the-shop point of view" and is dedicated to "humanity and the welfare of mankind."

He urged that the labor press redouble its activities in a continuation of its preelection campaign against antilabor legislation and reactionary forces.

In earlier convention actions, delegates from about 80 of the 219 member papers of the ILPA engaged in spirited debate over actions of vital interest to the labor press. Among the resolutions approved by the convention was one calling for the American Federation of Labor to expand the news and mat services now offered free of charge to newspapers endorsed by AFL affiliates.

Other approved resolutions dealt with the problems of obtaining advertising for local labor papers, and the methods to be followed in controling the unethical activities of papers which falsely represent themselves as official organs of the American Federation of Labor.

A feature of the banquet was the presentation of awards certificates to the winners in the journalism awards contest which is sponsored annually by the ILPA to promote and encourage quality journalism among representatives of the AFL labor press.

JOHN P. FREY HONORED FOR 53 YEARS' SERVICE

Cincinnati.—John P. Frey, president of the AFL's Metal Trades Department, was honored here for his 53 years of union leadership and his "service to his fellow trade unionists and his country."

In a colorful ceremony during the department's 39th annual convention, the Pacific Coast District Metal Trades Council presented the veteran AFL leader with a beautiful mahogany plaque embellished with 3 bronze medallions depicting the activities which make up the Metal Trades Department,: shipbuilding, production, and railroads. Inscribed in gold letters was the following inscription:

"The Pacific Coast District Metal Trades Council convention on February 12, 1948, presents to John P. Frey, president of the Metal Trades Department, this plaque, in appreciation of his many years of devoted service on behalf of his fellow trade unionists and his country."

THREE RAILROAD UNIONS ACCEPT 10-CENT PAY HIKE

Chicago.—More than 150,000 engineers, firemen and switchmen represented by 3 railroad operating unions, will receive a 10-cent hourly pay increase under an agreement negotiated here with the nation's railroads.

The pay increase was the same as that accepted a month ago by the 175,000 railroad employes represented by the Order of Railway Conductors and the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen.

The agreement winds up the drive for wage increases by the railroad operating unions, and is expected to set a pattern for the eventual settlement of the wage dispute between the railroads and 16 nonoperating unions.

FEDERAL HIRING REPORTED DOWN IN SEPTEMBER

Washington.—Job hiring by the federal government slacked off in September for the first net decrease since December, 1947, the Joint Committee of Reduction of Nonessential Federal Expenditures reported.

Decreases in employment totaled some 17,000, with main cuts being made in the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior, which engage in heavy seasonal employment; the War Assets Administration, which is in liquidation, and in civilian industrial employment overseas by the Army.

AFL Leader Urges 1950 Defeat of Congressmen Who Fail to Vote for Repeal of Labor Law; Demands Inflation, Housing Action

Cincinnati.—Sounding the keynote of the 67th convention of the American Federation of Labor, President William Green pledged the AFL to work for a progressive legislative program headed by the complete repeal of the Taft-Hartley law.

Mr. Green told over 700 delegates to the convention held in the Hall of Mirrors at the Netherland Plaza Hotel here that the labor law issue in the recent election campaign was clear-cut and straightforward. The party that won the election pledged itself to absolute repeal of the objectionable antilabor legislation, not its amendment or change, he said.

The AFL leader's firm declaration brought ringing cheers from the jubilant delegates who have gathered here as representatives of the AFL's 8,000,000 members. The atmosphere in the meeting hall bordered on that of a victory celebration, as labor looked to the future with supreme confidence that it faced better, brighter prospects now that the reactionary trend introduced by the Republican-controlled 80th Congress has been stopped in its tracks by a real election mandate from the American people.

The first week of the AFL convention will be devoted to prominent speakers who will address the delegates on important domestic and foreign issues. Meanwhile, convention committees secluded themselves to prepare reports and recommendations for later action by the convention.

The first day's session was opened with an invocation by Msgr. Marcellus Wagner, followed by welcoming addresses by Albert D. Cash, mayor of Cincinnati, and Judge Stewart of the Ohio Supreme Court. Other speakers included John J. Hurst, president of the Cincinnati Central Labor Council, who acted as temporary chairman and who introduced Mr. Green; and Michael Lyden and Phil Hannah, president and secretary-treasurer, respectively, of the Ohio State Federation of Labor.

Mr. Green's strong voice echoed through the hall with ringing tones as he outlined the AFL goals for the coming year. In addition to the repeal of the Taft-Hartley law, he demanded action to lift the minimum wage level; to provide a housing program to meet the needs of the American people, to prevent the spread of communism; and to curb the inflationary trend which is plaguing the nation.

On the political front, Mr. Green predicted that the AFL convention would act to make permanent Labor's League for Political Education, which, he said, "was responsible in a very large way for the great victory we won at the election on Nov. 2."

He warned that the full force of labor's political arm would be directed against any member of the 81st Congress who fails to abide by the people's mandate for repeal of the Taft-Hartley law.

Touching another aspect of foreign affairs, the AFL president pledged the continued assistance of the AFL for the Jewish people now struggling to establish themselves in their own republic.

Mr. Green declared that careful planning backed by the mobilized strength of working men and women the nation over operated to lift the veil of obscurity and uncertainty which shrouded the labor movement as a result of the enactment of the vicious Taft-Hartley law and the refusal of Congress to take care of the human needs of the American people.

"Our hopes are high, our vision is clear, our purpose is uncompromisingly fixed, and we are moved by a deep intention that labor shall be free, that it shall enjoy the blessings of freedom, liberty, and justice, and that, enjoying these priceless blessings, we shall so shape our policies at this convention as to preserve those blessings for ourselves and future generations."

"We do not meet here in a vindictive mood, but we meet here, moved by a feeling of tolerance and a desire to cooperate with all classes of people who work together to keep men free and to establish here in America the principles of liberty, freedom, and justice, and to perpetuate forever our American form of government. That is our policy and will be our policy, I am sure, all during the days to come.

In his discussion of labor's goal in striving for the repeal of the Taft-Hartley law, Mr. Green said:

"It is our purpose to center our efforts toward the repeal of this objectionable piece of legislation. There was no qualification in the campaign. Read the platform of the party that won and you will find there in simple, plain language that the repeal of the Taft-Hartley law must be made a certainty.

"Those who were elected to Congress by labor pledged themselves to vote for the repeal of the Taft-Hartley law. It wasn't that we should amend it, change it, and accept it in some amended form, but instead, it was repeal, repeal, repeal that objectionable piece of legislation.

"The question then is regarding policy. I am confident that this convention will speak in positive terms and that it will instruct its officers to introduce a repeal measure the moment Congress convenes, and then to mobilize behind that measure the full support of the working men and women of our nation. I know that the officers of the American Federation of Labor, those who represent your national unions, will join together in an organization invincible and indestructible, having for its purpose the repeal of the Taft-Hartley law at the earliest possible moment."

In urging continuance of Labor's League for Political Education, Mr. Green said such action would be justified if it did nothing else but to "help these representatives in Ohio to defeat the one who was a joint author of the Taft-Hartley law, and who lives in this city, when he is up for reelection in 1950."

On the subject of inflation, which has reduced the standard of living of the workers to a point below that which they enjoyed in 1943, despite higher wages won by labor, Mr. Green charged that the magnitude of the price rise has been brought about by the determination of business to charge whatever the traffic will bear."

Outlining AFL policy on a program for inflation control, Mr. Green asserted:

"We realize that it is a difficult economic problem and we are not prepared, in fact, we are unwilling to favor absolute widespread price control, because that means the development of black markets. Price control cannot achieve its purpose; it runs into conflict with economic law, and there is no law in the land so certain and so sure as the economic law.

"But it occurs to us that the government ought to call in the representatives of labor and management for the purpose of giving consideration to a constructive plan, having for its purpose the reduction of this inflation trouble that is affecting the homes of every family in America."

Mr. Green recounted the efforts expended successfully by the AFL for the relief of European victims of communist aggression. In addition to the AFL program, he said, labor has supported and will continue to support the economic cooperation administration in its administration of the European Recovery Program. The AFL leader praised labor for its part in the ECA program and declared that Economic Administrator Paul G. Hoffman and Secretary of State George C. Marshall have publicly acclaimed the effective service rendered by representatives of the American Federation of Labor. He said:

"In this crucial endeavor we have encountered active opposition not only from official communist sources, but from such communist sources as the so-called World Federation of Trade Unions. One of the most encouraging developments of the past year has been the growing disillusionment of noncommunist labor organizations in Europe with the WFTU. We are hopeful now that, led by the British Trades Union Congress, these noncommunist labor organizations will soon break away from the WFTU and join with us in the establishment of a new international labor federation which will present a united front against our common foe."

On the subject of housing, Mr. Green declared that the crying need of the American people is for low-cost housing. To alleviate the crisis, he declared, the 81st Congress must pass legislation similar to the Taft-Ellender-Wagner bill, which before its emasculation by the 80th Congress, provided for the construction of publicly financed low-cost dwelling units.

Another phase of the AFL's legislative program will be to insist upon the lifting of the minimum wage level, Mr. Green said, and added:

"If a worker subject to that law works 40 hours without being sick a minute, he would earn $16. Here in America a notorious reactionary Congress said, 'We will not change that,' and we interpret that language to mean that workers should not have more than $16 a week."

Concluding his address, Mr. Green declared:

"The American Federation of Labor stands as a bulwark against the invasion of ideologies that would change our form of government. The employing crafts of the nation ought to see what it means to them, if we are to preserve here in America our American form of government. Eight million members standing as one, speaking as one, working as one in opposition to the infiltration of communism into our American life. When we meet here the American Federation of Labor meets as a united body. We are not torn by dissension over that issue, but instead we stand united in our determination to go forward in the future as we have gone in the past.

"Does that mean anything to America? Does it mean anything to those outside our movement? Should a force in America that fights against the infiltration of a destructive ideology be destroyed and weakened, or should it be maintained strong and effective in order to protect our special order? That is the question that the enemies of labor should answer for themselves."

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WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE
SUPPLEMENT

WILLIAM GREEN, President | WASHINGTON, D. C., FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1948 | GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer

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AFL Convention Urges Renewed Efforts to Unify Labor Movement; Establishes Permanent Labor's League For Political Education

National Committee for LLPE Approves Move; Chief Function Educational Nature; Union Funds to Support Work

Cincinnati.—Enthused over the terrific successes scored by Labor's League for Political Education in its first election test, members of the LLPE national committee voted to establish it on a full-time basis in preparation for the 1950 congressional campaigns.

The action came at a special session of the committee which heard George Meany and Joseph D. Keenan, secretary-treasurer and director, respectively, of the political arm of the AFL give glowing accounts of the campaigns waged by the league against supporters of the Taft-Hartley law who were running for reelection to the 81st Congress.

The ultimate goal of the LLPE is to have a trade union political steward directing an effective team of volunteer workers in every one of the 110,000 urban and rural precincts in the nation.

Funds for the support of the league's activities during periods between actual political campaigns will be solicited from the American Federation of Labor and its affiliated national and local unions. This method of financing, the committee declared, is legal under the Taft-Hartley law so long as the league's activities are confined to educational purposes. Under the plan adopted, funds to carry on strictly political purposes will be raised through voluntary donations. Campaigns for such funds will be held annually and started in sufficient time to permit the collection of money well in advance of the primary elections in the various states.

The committee decided that to assure the financial success of the undertaking each international union will be asked to contribute an amount equal to 10 cents per member for the period between December 1, 1948, and February 1, 1950.

Following are sections taken from the plan approved by the national committee concerning the functions and purposes of the league:

"The function of the league in the period between election campaigns shall be to serve as an information and educational institution supplying to the labor press, our membership and to the public at large periodic reports on issues before Congress, the voting record of Congressmen in committees and on the floor of Congress."

"The league shall furnish to the leaders of farm, teacher, and small business and professional groups periodic reports and voting records on matters of interest to each particular group.

"Every form of educational medium shall be developed by the league. Recordings by national trade union leaders and Congressmen shall be supplied to local and state leagues for broadcast over local stations and at local union meetings and rallies. Motion pictures and film strips as well as turnover talks shall be developed to explain labor's legislative and political position and to emphasize the Democratic responsibility and right of each citizen to register and vote.

"Lobbying shall not be engaged in by Labor's League for Political Education at any time. But the educational work of the league will be developed strictly in accordance with AFL legislative policy.

"Immediate steps shall be taken to improve and increase cooperative relationships between Labor's League for Political Education and farm, professional, liberal nonpartisan committees and other labor groups. The cooperation of women's auxiliaries of labor during this last compaign was of tremendous value. All existing auxiliaries must be brought in as active participants in our political program. Where auxiliaries do not exist they must be organized."

In their reports, Mr. Meany and Mr. Keenan gave a detailed summary of the LLPE campaigns. The following, taken from Mr. Meany's report is a brief summary:

"Organized labor deserves a major share of the credit for the sweeping political victory. The results of [illegible] of labor's position in opposition to the Taft-Hartley Act. It is important to note that not one single Senator who voted against the Taft-Hartley Act was defeated and not one single friendly seat in the House of Representatives was lost. One truth stands out and it will be remembered by future candidates for public office—the support of labor's rights is not a political liability.

"At the same time opposition to labor's rights and to other progessive legislation is a serious political liability.

"LLPE has published a report to the membership entitled 'Thanks for a Job Well Done.' This report shows that of the 32 Senate seats up for reelection only 4 were held by liberal Senators. All 4 of these friends were reelected. At the same time 17 Senators who voted for the Taft-Hartley Act were retired and 12 new labor-supported candidates were elected.

"In the House of Representatives 172 LLPE-backed candidates were elected. 106 unfriendly Representatives who voted against our interests in the 80th Congress were retired and every friendly seat was saved."

Brown Says Election Win Aids Free European Labor

Cincinnati.—Irving Brown, European representative for the AFL, declared that the recent election victory has given "courage, heart and stimulation" to the labor movement in Europe which is desperately struggling against the aggressive tactics of the world Communist organizations.

In a report to the convention on the European situation, Mr. Brown gave a first-hand account of the attempts of the quasi-military organization of the Communist Party to keep economic conditions in chaos by sabotaging the workings of the Marshall Plan.

The present conflict has reached a crescendo, he said, in the strikes that are "now being organized as political strikes, as military strikes against the present democratic regime in France." He added:

"The recent coal mine strike in France, which you have read about in the newspapers here, was not a strike for economic demands, it was not a strike for legitimate grievances, although the people of Europe have legitimate grievances. This was a strike organized by the militarized, totalitarianized Communist movement of France to destroy the French economy as the first step in an attempt to destroy the efforts of the European Recovery Program. It is the first step of the French Communist movement to destroy at this moment the most decisive and the most important key country in the attempt to reconstruct and gain stability in western Europe against those who wish to destroy and dominate Europe.

"What is happening in France affects the lives and the trade union movement of America today. If France falls, or if France remains in constant civil war and civil conflict, it means that western Europe cannot stabilise itself and that western Europe cannot succeed in rebuilding on a stable political basis. And if that cannot be achieved then democracy in Europe cannot succeed and the United States cannot succeed in its efforts to maintain political and economic democracy in Europe and throughout the world."

In the struggle to rebuild the European economy and to ward off Communist attacks, Mr. Brown declared the American Federation of Labor has played an "important and decisive role."

In France, he said, the AFL has assisted the Force Ouvriere, the anti-Communist labor organization; AFL representatives participate in the activities of the ERP Trade Union Advisory Committee which was originated with the hearty support of the AFL organization; the AFL has assisted in the establishment of a Trade Union Movement in Exile consisting of trade union members exiled from the Soviet satellite states; the AFL has assisted in reducing the influence of the World Federation of Trade Unions to the near-vanishing point; and AFL unions through their affiliation with and support for the various international trade secretariats have strengthened the hand of all those who are resisting the Communist push to the west.

"In this fight," Brown said, "you must know that our movement, our organization is becoming a center. It is becoming a magnetic point around which all of those who have been hurt, who have been injured and in many cases who have been smashed by this totalitarian juggernaut have begun to rally around.

"We today live in the most powerful economic unit, the most powerful economic country in the world. Our labor movement means very much to those who once lost freedom. They know what it is through their own experiences in the concentration camps and western labor knows what it is, having existed under the heel of four years of Nazi black dictatorship. They don't want to go back to those days. They don't want to accept a new totalitarianism, whether it is red, black, yellow or anything. They are fighting, they are struggling in France and Italy and Germany.

"They can win. They can win with our help and with the help of America, and above everything else a successful and prosperous and economically advanced America and American trade unionism."

Text of Truman's Message To AFL's 67th Convention

Cincinnati.—Following is the full text of a special message sent by President Harry S. Truman to the AFL convention in session here:

Please extend to the officers and delegates attending the 67th annual convention of the American Federation of Labor my congratulations and best wishes for a successful and constructive meeting in Cincinnati. I regret that I am unable to be present to talk with you in person about the tremendous challenge that faces us both at home and abroad today.

The American Federation of Labor, looking back over its many years of service to American wage earners, may well be proud of what it has accomplished in their behalf. Your leaders were responsible for the establishment of the United States Department of Labor under William B. Wilson, its first Secretary.

Your unions have set an example to labor throughout the world in the support of principles of progressive liberalism.

The American Federation of Labor has been a leader in helping to bring about the enactment of the broad program on social legislation which has improved the standard of living of so many of our people. The Federation, I am sure, will continue to work with wisdom and perseverance in the interest of still further improvement of our way of life and in safeguarding the democratic principles which have made us strong. Your unions and all patriotic Americans can be assured of my full support in carrying forward a program for the benefit of all the people of our nation. American workers can be assured that the Department of Labor which we have seen stripped of much of its power and influence by a hostile Congress will be restored to its proper status. As democratic, freedom loving Americans we have never failed a great challenge. We will not fail now. I know that together with all patriotic groups in our great country, labor accepts the challenge on behalf of free people everywhere. May God guide you as you face the future.

HARRY S. TRUMAN.

Hoffman Says Success of Marshall Plan Depends on American, European Workers

Cincinnati.—Paul G. Hoffman, Economic Cooperation Administrator, declared here that the ultimate success of the European recovery plan is dependent upon the degree of cooperation extended by both American and European workers.

Mr. Hoffman's statement came during the course of an address before the AFL convention in which he gave a comprehensive review of the origin of the Marshall Plan, its operations to date, and an estimate of the progress made in the rehabilitation of Europe's economy.

The well known industrialist, who was given the vast job of administering the foreign aid program, expressed satisfaction over the rate of progress under the plan both in terms of tangible and intangible results. He said that production of food and manufactured goods in western Europe is running well ahead of the 1947 rate and has exceeded the original expectations. On the intangible side, he stressed the fact that the new "spirit of cooperation that has come to Europe as a direct result of the Marshall Plan" is "our best hope for peace."

On the question of the vital need for the complete cooperation of labor, Mr. Hoffman said that "if workers lose faith in the program because they do not understand it, they have it within their power to undermine it." He declared:

"The strike in the French coal mines is a perfect example of the need of understanding.

"That French strike highlights two of the more sinister motives behind the Communist front. It is true that the French miners, like other Franch workers, are suffering from economic hardship. It is a sad fact and one that calls for action. But what action did the Communists propose? Capitalizing on the sufferings of the miners, the Communists staged a strike. During the strike they took the unprecedented action of calling the maintenance men out of the mines.

"What could be the point then of pulling maintenance men out of the French mines? Certainly it was not in the interests of the workers, but it was very much in the interests of the Communists.

"The Communists ordered the costly coal strike with three aims in mind. They wished to:

"1. Bring the French economy to a lower plane of accomplishment;

"2. Cripple the recovery program;

"It is part of the cold war against the Marshall Plan.

"3. Promote the imperialistic aims of the Kremlin dictatorship.

"Around these vicious aims they have sought to throw the protective mantle of labor's ideology. They pretended the strike was the traditional effort to secure a better standard of living for the French miners. In actual truth, every closed mine has brought the French workers closer to freezing, and closer to economic paralysis.

"It is a matter of much satisfaction to us in ECA that American trade unionists quickly saw through these communistic tactics. They recognized that their real purpose was to create general confusion—to work for chaos, not recovery."

While emphasizing the need for continued labor cooperation, Mr. Hoffman lauded members of organized labor in the United States for the prompt and forceful backing they gave the European Recovery Program during its consideration by Congress, and praised the aid rendered by labor officials who have taken important posts with ECA both here and abroad. He said:

"I want to pay tribute to the contribution that those labor leaders have already made to whatever success we have enjoyed."

CITIZENSHIP AWARD GIVEN GREEN BY VFW

Cincinnati.—AFL President William Green was honored by the Veterans of Foreign Wars for his "truly outstanding work in guarding the security of the United States of America."

VFW Commander-in-Chief Lyall T. Beggs, at the conclusion of his address to the AFL convention, presented Mr. Green with the VFW gold citizenship medal.

A citation accompanying the award said the medal was presented "in recognition of his many outstanding contributions to labor, to labor's advancements and achievements during the past 24 years, and to commend through him the American Federation of Labor for its power and effective campaign to exclude Communism and all other un-American influences from the ranks of organized labor."

Veterans' Chiefs Laud AFL's Drive Against Commies

Cincinnati.—Top officers of two of the nation's influential veterans' organizations sounded warnings against the menace of Communism in addresses here before the 67th AFL convention.

National Commander Perry Brown of the American Legion and Lyall T. Beggs, commander-in-chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, praised the AFL for its success in combating the infiltration of Communists into the labor movement, and urged redoubled efforts to guard against fifth column activities.

Commander Brown declared that by expelling Communists from its ranks the AFL had "scored for all Americans one of the most dramatic and telling victories in our 30-year encounter with Communism."

Urging continued vigilance, the American Legion spokesman warned that there was no room for complacency over the Communist threat, since "Communists have demonstrated a remarkable facility for surviving knock-downs."

"The great hope of the nation, today," he said, "is that they will always receive from labor and other groups the kind of treatment meted out to them by the men and women of the AFL."

Mr. Beggs also paid a tribute to the AFL for "the truly magnificent job it has done in purging Communists from the ranks of organized labor."

While nobody wishes to see another war, Commander Beggs asserted, if hostilities with Russia broke out, the Communists expect to put into operation "detailed plans for drastic disruption of the country's vital industries.

"Unless we wake up fully to the dangers that face us," he warned, "we may find ourselves locked in a death struggle for survival."

Proper Understanding of Labor's Goals Is Imperative to Nation, Steelman Says

Cincinnati.—John R. Steelman, assistant to President Truman, declared that it is imperative for the nation that there be greater understanding of the broader "purposes and goals of organized labor."

In an address before the AFL's 67th convention here, Dr. Steelman asserted that over the past 20 years labor's social goals have become in large measure the social goals of the nation, but emphasized that there is "much to be done."

The former head of the federal conciliation service singled out labor for the chief role in an effort to promote greater understanding, and declared it has 3 chief responsibilities:

1. Labor must realize its economic responsibility. This, he maintained, means more than higher wages and shorter working hours. He said:

"The welfare of labor, as of all other groups, requires stabilization of prices; it requires industrial peace; it requires high-level efficiency of production; and it requires sound business relations with the rest of the world."

2. Labor must never default in its responsibility to the community. Declaring that an active awareness of this responsibility will lead to better public relations for labor, Dr. Steelman praised the record of the American Federation of Labor in this field. He said:

"Your leaders have known that it takes more than wage increases and shorter hours to provide a full life for the union member. They recognize that the worker first of all is an American, and that the purpose of union endeavor is the enrichment of the lives of the workers."

3. Labor must accept responsibility for the day-to-day application of democratic principles.

Warning that high-sounding phrases on the subject of the democratic way of life are not enough, Dr. Steelman declared that union members must "live" democracy and "weave it into the fabric of our daily life" in order to combat successfully the forces of communism and other foes of democracy. He said:

"The American Federation of Labor, by virtue of its record and its leadership, is in the vanguard of progress toward a better and fuller life."

Teamsters First Union To Contribute to LLPE

Cincinnati.—In a dramatic ceremony at the AFL convention, here, Labor's League for Political Education got off to a flying start in its drive to raise funds to carry on the permanent educational activity of the organization.

Daniel J. Tobin, president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, announced that his union had contributed $62,500 to the LLPE treasury, the first union to take such action since the league was newly constituted on a permanent basis.

Appearing on the platform in the convention hall, Mr. Tobin presented a check to AFL President William Green for this amount while delegates at the convention cheered wildly.

In a brief address to the convention, Mr. Tobin emphasized the important activity of the league and urged complete support for its efforts in order that a complete and sweeping majority in Congress may be won to assure that labor's rights will receive adequate protection and consideration.

The Teamsters' chief said the decision of LLPE's national committee to request each national union to contribute an amount equal to 10 cents per member to be in the nature of an assessment on the union.

Before turning the check over to Mr. Green, Mr. Tobin asked whether the contribution could be made legally under the Taft-Hartley law. J. Albert Woll, general counsel for the AFL, said that in the absence of specific court decisions on the point it was his opinion that the money could be used legally as long as it was expended for educational purposes.

Executive Council Urged to Press Matter As Means of Strengthening Movement; Office of Vice-President Created

Cincinnati.—Nearing the end of the first week of sessions, the 67th AFL convention declared itself in favor of redoubled efforts to bring about organizational unity in the labor movement, acted to establish Labor's League for Political Education on a permanent basis, and recreated the office of vice-president of the AFL.

These actions were taken during a week largely devoted to the presentation of addresses delivered by prominent figures who spoke on domestic and foreign issues of vital interest to organized labor. Meanwhile, convention committees prepared reports and recommendations for presentation to the delegates in a final drive to dispose of the business pending before the convention.

The reinstatement of the office of vice-president was made possible by amending the AFL constitution. The net effect of the action is merely to change the title of the members of the Executive Council, and to restore the situation in effect prior to the 66th convention held in San Francisco in 1947.

The national committee of Labor's League for Political Education, which consists of the presidents of all AFL national and international unions, voted unanimously to make LLPE a permanent arm of the AFL to carry on educational and political activity. The action came after George Meany and Joseph D. Keenan, secretary-treasurer and director, respectively, of LLPE, submitted reports on the amazing successes won by labor in the 1948 election campaigns.

The chief function of the LLPE in periods between actual election campaigns will be to serve as an educational institution. Funds for the support of the educational phase of the league's activities will be raised through contributions of the AFL and its affiliated unions. In the opinion of the AFL's general counsel, J. Albert Woll, the Taft-Hartley law does not prevent the use of such union funds as long as they are spent solely for educational or informational purposes.

The convention declaration on labor unity called upon the AFL Executive Council to pursue with new vigor "its efforts to bring about unity between all bona fide labor unions in our nation."

Citing the recent political victory as evidence of what can be accomplished through the cooperative efforts of labor, the declaration said:

"The greatest possible impetus toward the organization of workers would come from extending such unity. All of the resources and energy now consumed in civil war could then be turned toward advancing the economic and social welfare of labor, of our nation, and of the world."

In another action the convention voted to refer to the Executive Council for further study a resolution calling for the doubling of strike benefits paid by the American Federation of Labor.

The convention also voted an amendment to the AFL constitution which raised the salaries of the president and the secretary-treasurer to $25,000 and $23,000, respectively. The increase was the first given in 8 years.

Other major convention news included:

1. Representatives of the Austrian Trade Union Federation and the free trade unions in Berlin and western Germany reported to the convention on the growth of the trade union movement since the end of the war, and expressed their appreciation to the AFL for the assistance given them.

2. Mr. Isaac Ben Zvi, representative of the new State of Israel and of the Histadrut, the labor federation in that republic, addressed the convention and asked for the continued support of the AFL.

3. The commanders of the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars warned that the Communists are attempting to spread their influence in the United States, and pledged their organizations to work with the AFL against fifth column activities.

4. Paul G. Hoffman, ECA Administrator, declared the success of the European Recovery Program depends upon the loyal cooperation of both American and European workers.

5. Cyrus S. Ching, director of the Federal Meriation and Conciliation Service, warned that if free collective bargaining does not work, we will lose a cornerstone of our democracy.

6. Irving Brown and Henry Rutz, AFL representatives in Europe, reported on the decisive campaign being waged by the Communists who hope to sabotage the Marshall Plan and wreck Europe's economy beyond repair.

7. Dr. John Steelman, assistant to President Truman, urged labor to broaden the scope of its social programs.

Real Acceptance of Labor By Business Needed in Free Bargaining, Says Ching

Cincinnati.—American business management must give honest acceptance to organized labor to make free collective bargaining work, declared Cyrus S. Ching, director of the federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

In an address to the 67th convention of the AFL here, Mr. Ching declared that merely extending recognition to a union is not sufficient to insure good labor-management relations. Labor must be considered an integral part of the business operation, he declared.

On the subject of the collective bargaining process itself, Mr. Ching emphasized the important place it holds in a democratic society.

"I came to the conclusion," he said, "that if we could not make free collective bargaining work in this country, we would then remove one of the cornerstones of our democratic government."

The federal conciliator viewed collective bargaining as an opportunity for both labor and management to work toward a national unity which is so vital now that world leadership has been thrust upon the United States. Declaring that greater responsibilities rest on America's industrialists and organized labor alike than on any other groups, Mr. Ching declared:

"I think it behooves all of us to look at our situation as it exists today, not only in this country but in the rest of the world, see the position we occupy and take unto ourselves the responsibility for doing our share in preserving our freedom, which can best be done by making our contribution to national unity and better understanding because, after all, this whole matter of labor relations is human relations."

"I can see here with our system of government, with our position in world affairs, the magnificent opportunity that is presented to labor and management in this country to accomplish something, something outstanding. If we seize that opportunity, we won't have to issue propaganda. All we will have to do is to point to the facts as they exist in regard to our national unity."

Mr. Ching struck at the misconception in the public mind to the effect that the whole matter of collective bargaining and labor relations is one of conflict. Declaring that the opposite is true, he said:

"If you will think of the hundreds of thousands of labor contracts that are negotiated every year without any government interference, without asking for outside help, but solely on the basis of good sound, relationships that have been built up over a long period of years, if you view that picture as against the picture that we have presented to us many times where it looks as if the world were askew and there was nothing in the air but strikes, it is a remarkable picture.

"It is as remarkable as the picture which was presented during the war when strikes were headlined in the newspapers and yet when you took the percentage of days lost by strikes as compared with the total man-hours worked, the percentage was so small you couldn't find it.

"I think it is to the everlasting credit of organized labor and the workers of this country that record was made during the war."

Turning to a discussion of the role of the federal government in the collective bargaining process, Mr. Ching said that its major role is that of rendering a service of an impartial character to assist both parties involved in a dispute over labor relations to reach an amicable settlement.

BEHNCKE REELECTED HEAD OF AIR LINE PILOTS UNION

Chicago.—Davil L. Behncke was reelected to his 10th 2-year term as president of the Air Line Pilots Association, AFL, at the close of the annual convention here. He has led the association since its founding 18 years ago. J. E. Wood of Eastern Air Lines was reelected first vice-president and F. A. Spencer of American Airlines was elected secretary and R. G. Strait of Trans-World Airlines treasurer.

STATE LABOR STATUTES TOP TAFT-HARTLEY LAW

Washington.—The Taft-Hartley law yields superiority to state laws which "prohibit" compulsory union membership agreements but not to state laws which merely "regulate" such agreements, the National Labor Relations Board ruled.

The issue came up in the case of Northland Greyhound Lines, Inc., and the Street Railway and Motor Coach Employes, AFL. The union petitioned the NLRB to poll the employes.